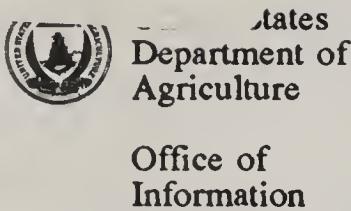


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# Selected Speeches and News Releases

January 19 - January 26, 1989

## IN THIS ISSUE:

### News Releases—

USDA Proposes to Allow Air Injection During Carcass Dressing Operations

USDA Proposes to Allow A New Binder in Ground and Formed Poultry Products

USDA Proposes to Further Limit Nitrites in Bacon

USDA Proposes to Allow Importation of Livestock Carcasses With Tissues Removed

USDA to Reserve 563 Summer Jobs for Students of 1890 Institutions

USDA Announces Preliminary Flue-Cured Tobacco Referendum Results

USDA "Uncouples" Beef Grading Activity

Forest Service Issues Final Rules on Appeals Process

Forest Service Proposes Oil and Gas Regulations

U.S. Tobacco Industry to Buy 427 Million Pounds of 1989 Burley Tobacco

USDA Installs Fee for Voluntary Inspection of Export Tobacco

USDA Amends Brucellosis Regulations

USDA Announces Prevailing World Market Rice Prices

USDA Releases Soil and Water Conservation Plan for 1990's



# News Releases

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## USDA PROPOSES TO ALLOW AIR INJECTION DURING CARCASS DRESSING OPERATIONS

WASHINGTON, Jan. 13—The U.S. Department of Agriculture is proposing to allow cattle and hog slaughter plants to inject air into carcasses to aid in the dressing operation.

The intent of the original law, which did not allow the use of air, was to prevent adulterated or mislabeled carcasses or parts, since inflating carcasses with air could alter their true appearance, according to Dr. Lester M. Crawford, administrator of USDA's Food Safety and Inspection Service.

"However, we found no alteration of the true appearance or condition of the carcasses when the proposed procedures were tested at several plants," said Crawford. "We determined these new methods actually aided in removing hair and skin from cattle and hogs, so we believe it is only practical to amend the current regulations."

The number of requests to use air during dressing operations has been increasing, and provisional approval has already been given to some plants.

Future requests for the use of air must be specifically approved on an individual basis by USDA to ensure that the use of air is justifiable.

The proposal will be open for comments through March 14.

The proposed rule is scheduled for publication in the today's Federal Register. Written comments on the proposal should be sent in duplicate to the Policy Office, Attn. Linda Carey, FSIS Hearing Clerk, Room 3168-S, FSIS, USDA, Washington, D.C. 20250.

FSIS inspects meat and poultry products to ensure that they are safe, wholesome and accurately labeled.

Richard Bryant (202) 447-9113

#

## **USDA PROPOSES TO ALLOW A NEW BINDER IN GROUND AND FORMED POULTRY PRODUCTS**

**WASHINGTON**, Jan. 13—The U.S. Department of Agriculture is proposing to allow processors to use a mixture of sodium alginate, calcium carbonate, lactic acid and calcium lactate as a binder in ground and formed poultry products. The proposal will be open for comments through Feb. 13.

Poultry processors would be able to use a wider variety of binders in products if the proposal is adopted, according to Dr. Lester M. Crawford, administrator of USDA's Food Safety and Inspection Service. The use of the binder mixture in poultry products would be voluntary.

"We've reviewed research data indicating that small amounts of the binder mixture are safe and useful for maintaining the cohesiveness of raw and precooked formed poultry products," said Crawford. "All the substances in the mixture are generally recognized as safe by the Food and Drug Administration for use in food either separately or as a dry mixture."

The proposed rule would also require that the term "formed" and the ingredients in the binder be listed as part of the product's name.

Processors can use the dry binder as an alternative to sodium chloride and phosphate salts, which may reduce the sodium content of the formed products. Sodium chloride and phosphate salts are used for flavor and to aid in the binding of the poultry pieces.

The proposed rule is scheduled to be published in today's Federal Register. Comments will be accepted through Feb. 13 and should be sent to: Policy Office, Attn: Linda Carey, Hearing Clerk, FSIS, USDA, Washington, D.C. 20250.

FSIS ensures that all ingredients used in poultry products are safe and wholesome and that the products are accurately labeled.

Richard Bryant (202) 447-9113

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## **USDA PROPOSES TO FURTHER LIMIT NITRITES IN BACON**

**WASHINGTON**, Jan. 13—The U.S. Department of Agriculture today proposed to prohibit the use of nitrates and reduce the amount of nitrites in two curing methods for specialty bacon.

"We believe that prohibiting nitrates and limiting nitrite levels in specialty bacon will help prevent any health risk from potential nitrosamine production," said Dr. Lester M. Crawford, administrator of USDA's Food Safety and Inspection Service. The two substances are used in the curing process to prevent botulism.

Specialty bacon accounts for only about two percent of the bacon produced in the United States, Crawford said. The proposal would permit processors to use nitrites up to 120 parts per million (ppm) in specialty bacons which are immersion-cured and 200 ppm in those which are dry-cured.

About 98 percent of the bacon produced in the United States is cured by injecting or "pumping" nitrite cures into pork bellies. FSIS does not allow nitrates and limits nitrites in pumped bacon.

"Massaged bacon," a more recent bacon processing method in which pork bellies are placed in drums with curing agents and tumbled until the cure is absorbed, would be subject to the same regulations as pumped bacon under this proposal.

Nitrosamines, some of which have been shown to cause cancer in laboratory animals, may form when nitrites combine with natural meat amines during frying. FSIS tests pumped bacon for nitrosamines and retains products containing confirmable levels.

This proposal follows an agency task force finding that nitrosamine production is dependent on the amount of nitrite residue left in bacon after the curing process. Nitrates are used to produce nitrites during curing.

USDA is also withdrawing a 1980 proposal on the same subject. The proposal is scheduled for publication in the Jan. 13 Federal Register.

Written comments may be sent to Policy Office, Attn. Linda Carey, FSIS Hearing Clerk, Room 3168-S, FSIS, USDA, Washington, D.C. 20250. Comments must be received by March 14.

FSIS is responsible for ensuring that meat and poultry products are safe, wholesome, and accurately labeled.

Richard Bryant (202) 447-9113

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## **USDA PROPOSES TO ALLOW IMPORTATION OF LIVESTOCK CARCASSES WITH TISSUES REMOVED**

**WASHINGTON**, Jan. 17—The U.S. Department of Agriculture is proposing to amend federal meat inspection regulations to allow importation of livestock carcasses with certain tissues removed.

Current regulations prohibit importation of carcasses or parts of carcasses of livestock such as cattle, sheep, swine, and goats from which the pleura, peritoneum, body or portal lymph nodes have been removed. These tissues can help food inspectors spot disease or other abnormalities in the animals, said Dr. Lester M. Crawford, administrator of USDA's Food Safety and Inspection Service.

"These requirements were instituted many years ago, at a time when foreign countries' exporting practices were very different from those of today," Crawford said. "Today, all countries which are certified as eligible to export meat to the United States must have an inspection system that is equal to ours. This means that the carcasses, including these specific tissues, have already been inspected in that country."

FSIS reinspects imported meat and poultry products at the port of entry in the United States to ensure that they are safe, wholesome, and accurately labeled.

The proposal is in response to a petition from Cloverdale Foods Company, Minot, N.D.

The proposed rule is scheduled to appear in today's Federal Register. Public comment will be accepted through Feb. 16 and should be sent to: Policy Office, Attn. Linda Carey, FSIS Hearing Clerk, Room 3171-S, USDA, Washington, D.C. 20250.

Linda Russell (202) 447-9113

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## **USDA TO RESERVE 563 SUMMER JOBS FOR STUDENTS OF 1890 INSTITUTIONS**

**WASHINGTON**, Jan. 17—The U.S. Department of Agriculture will reserve 563 positions in its 1989 summer jobs program for students from 17 historically black land-grant institutions.

Deputy Secretary of Agriculture Peter C. Myers said the targeted summer jobs are part of USDA's efforts to increase the number of minority students in agriculture, forestry and home economics, and encourage them to seek careers in those disciplines. Students eligible for the reserved jobs are those enrolled in Tuskegee University and the 16 universities established under the 1890 land grant legislation.

"These summer job opportunities will provide minority students with a working knowledge to broaden their understanding of agricultural activities and encourage them to seek careers with USDA and other agricultural employers," Myers said. "Agriculture is more than crop and livestock production. Animal and plant sciences, economics, forestry, marketing and computer technology are just some of the varied careers fields in agriculture today."

Myers said the positions will be with 19 USDA agencies and will be located nationwide. They include assignments in a wide variety of disciplines, including biological and natural resource sciences, computer science, veterinary medicine, and administrative support. He said students at the 17 institutions who are interested in the USDA summer jobs should contact their university placements offices before March 1.

The summer jobs program is one of several USDA initiatives to improve communications and develop more active partnerships with the 1890 institutions. On Dec. 29, USDA announced it is establishing liaison offices at the 17 universities to act as a focal point for all USDA activities on those campuses. USDA's 1990 budget, released Jan. 9, proposes \$80.2 million for new and expanded programs to increase the teaching, recruitment and research capabilities of the 1890 institutions. This is more than a 20 percent increase over last year.

The 17 institutions are: Alabama A&M University, Huntsville; Alcorn State University, Lorman, Miss.; University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff; Delaware State College, Dover; Florida A&M University, Tallahassee; Fort Valley State College, Fort Valley, Ga.; Kentucky State University, Frankfort; Langston University, Langston, Okla.; Lincoln University, Jefferson City, Mo.; University of Maryland-Eastern Shore, Princess Anne; North Carolina A&T State University, Greensboro; Prairie View A&M University, Prairie View, Texas; South Carolina State College, Orangeburg; Southern University, Baton Rouge, La.; Tennessee State University, Nashville; Tuskegee University, Tuskegee, Ala.; and Virginia State University, Petersburg.

Diane O'Connor (202) 447-4026

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## **USDA ANNOUNCES PRELIMINARY FLUE-CURED TOBACCO REFERENDUM RESULTS**

**WASHINGTON**, Jan. 18—Preliminary results from a mail referendum held Jan. 9-12 indicate flue-cured tobacco growers voted to continue acreage-poundage marketing quotas and price supports for their crops for the next three years, according to an official with the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

Milton J. Hertz, administrator of USDA's Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service, said preliminary results show that 22,950 of the 23,442 producers who voted in the referendum—or 97.9 percent—voted "yes". A vote of at least two-thirds in favor was necessary for continuing quotas and supports.

In the last referendum, held in March 1986, 93.7 percent of the voting growers of flue-cured tobacco favored marketing quotas for the 1986, 1987 and 1988 crops.

Flue-cured tobacco is grown in Alabama, Florida, Georgia, North Carolina, South Carolina and Virginia. Preliminary results by states are as follows:

<b>State</b>	<b>Votes Cast</b>	<b>Percentage Favoring Quotas</b>
Alabama .....	9	100.0
Florida .....	245	98.0
Georgia .....	1,488	96.8
North Carolina .....	16,990	98.1
South Carolina .....	1,655	98.6
Virginia.....	3,075	96.5

Robert Feist (202) 447-6789

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## **USDA "UNCOUPLES" BEEF GRADING ACTIVITY**

**WASHINGTON**, Jan. 19—The U.S. Department of Agriculture today announced a final rule separating, or "uncoupling," USDA beef quality and beef yield grades, effective April 9.

Administrator J. Patrick Boyle of USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service said, "The rule allows the beef industry to determine whether to have carcasses graded by USDA for quality, or for yield, or both. Previously, a carcass had to be graded both for quality and yield, or not graded at all."

Quality grades—Prime, Choice, Select, etc.—identify differences in the palatability of beef principally through its marbling and maturity characteristics. Yield grades—1,2,3,4 and 5—identify differences in the percentage of lean meat obtained from a carcass. Grading services are provided to the beef industry by AMS on a user-fee basis.

"The change is USDA's response to a joint petition from the American Meat Institute and the National Cattlemen's Association requesting 'uncoupling' of the two grading procedures," Boyle said. "The industry associations requested the change in order to utilize new, more efficient technologies now available for preparing beef carcasses, one of which is 'hot-fat trimming,' which is trimming fat just after slaughter rather than after chilling, as is current practice," he said.

"This rule should benefit producers, packers, and consumers alike," said Boyle. "It allows packers the option to use new technologies, and also may allow cattle producers to be compensated for the lean meat yield of their animals."

With the beef grades "uncoupled," those producers who produce cattle with less fat, and therefore higher-trimmed carcass weights, may be paid more for their animals, Boyle said. Such a system would encourage beef producers to continue their adoption of breeding and feeding technologies which yield leaner cattle. Because beef carcasses have been required to be graded for both quality and yield, packers have been prevented from using technology such as hot-fat trimming, Boyle explained.

"Hot-fat trimming is one example of new technologies which would enable the industry to more efficiently meet today's consumer demand for trimmer beef," Boyle said.

"The 'uncoupling' of USDA's beef grades would make the system more flexible in meeting the needs of its users, but would not alter the quality or yield grade standards. With uncoupling, a packer can still pay

USDA to grade both quality and yield on untrimmed carcasses in order to supply buyers desiring both grade stamps on beef," Boyle said.

Notice of the final rule will be published in the Jan. 24 Federal Register. Further information may be obtained from the Livestock and Meat Standardization Branch, Livestock and Seed Division, AMS, USDA, Rm. 2649-S, P.O. Box 96456, Washington, D.C. 20090-6456.

George Clarke (202) 447-8998

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## **FOREST SERVICE ISSUES FINAL RULES ON APPEALS PROCESS**

**WASHINGTON**, Jan. 19—The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Forest Service today instituted new, streamlined procedures for handling public appeals of land and resource management decisions by FS officials.

The new rules separate procedures for appealing FS decisions on use and occupancy permits for National Forest System land from procedures for appealing decisions on land and resource management plans and individual, ground-disturbing projects.

"The system for handling appeals on use or occupancy permits is more procedural than the new system, and does not easily accommodate the growing number of appeals involving land and resource management plans," said Forest Service Chief F. Dale Robertson. "Using the two appeals channels will expedite the resolution of disagreements between citizens and decisionmakers without unnecessarily delaying national forest management."

Other changes in the new final rules are substantially different from the rules proposed last May, Robertson said, and were made in response to nearly 6,000 written and oral comments from the public. Those changes include:

- Requiring notification of an official decision, in writing, to individuals or organizations who have requested it and to those who have participated in the decisionmaking process;

- Requiring a two-level review of district ranger decisions;

- Stipulating a 90-day period for filing a notice of appeal on a forest plan decision;

- Reinstating intervention rights of third parties; i.e., parties wh may

be affected by a proposed Forest Service action are now allowed to become involved in dispute resolution even if they are not legal appellants.

—Limiting circumstances under which USDA may allow time extensions during the review process. Under the new rules, extensions are allowed only if the Forest Service requires additional information or time in negotiating with an appellant.

—Eliminating oral presentations, but retaining opportunities for all parties to request meetings to resolve disputed decisions.

“We believe these revised regulations will encourage more discussion of conflicts among those who make and review the decisions and those who appeal them,” Robertson said. “We want to get disputes resolved as quickly and as satisfactorily as practical.”

The new rules amending the Code of Federal Regulations, Title 36, Part 251 (covering use or occupancy permits) and Part 217 (covering land and resource management plans and ground-disturbing projects), are scheduled for publication in the Federal Register Jan. 23. The rules take effect 30 days from this date.

For more information, contact Larry Hill, (202) 382-9349, or Kathryn Hauser, (202) 382-9346.

Rose Narlock (202) 475-3778

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## **FOREST SERVICE PROPOSES OIL AND GAS REGULATIONS**

**WASHINGTON**, Jan. 19—The U.S. Department of Agriculture’s Forest Service today proposed rules designed to assure that oil and gas production will occur in an environmentally sound basis on the nation’s 156 national forests.

Oil and gas companies hold leases for 17 million acres of National Forest System land, and annually produce 19 million barrels of oil and 8 billion cubic feet of gas from those holdings.

The proposed regulations were prompted by the Federal Onshore Oil and Gas Leasing Reform Act of 1987 and by federal court direction to the secretary of agriculture.

Forest Service Chief F. Dale Robertson said the agency “recognizes and supports the critical need for national forest contributions to the nation’s energy supplies. These regulations will assure that these

important contributions can be made in an environmentally sensitive way.''

Robertson said the proposed rules provide for a more active role by the Forest Service in the approval of oil and gas leasing and operations on the National Forest System's 191 million acres. In the past, leasing authority was held exclusively by the U.S. Department of Interior's Bureau of Land Management. The Leasing Reform Act expanded the authority of the secretary of agriculture in the process, and under the proposed rules, leases for oil and gas on national forest lands cannot be issued by the BLM without the approval of the Forest Service.

The public has 60 days to comment on the draft regulations after they appear in the Jan. 23 Federal Register. Final regulations will be issued after the public comments are evaluated.

The U.S. Department of the Interior's Bureau of Land Management has the authority to issue oil and gas leases and applications for permits to drill on National Forest System lands, as well as other Federal land.

Robertson noted, however, that several requirements relative to USDA are new: (1) BLM cannot issue leases on National Forest System land without Forest Service approval; (2) surface-disturbing activities must be approved by the Forest Service; and (3) if a person has materially failed or refused to comply with these rules, the secretary of agriculture will determine if such person is entitled to future leases.

As proposed, within six months after the proposed regulations become final the Forest Service will begin identifying National Forest System lands with potential for oil and gas leasing. This identification will be based on existing oil and gas production, known geologic potential, or industry interest in given areas. The agency then will determine if these lands are legally available for leasing.

Then, the Forest Service will decide which of these available lands are suitable for leasing, based on consistency with forest plans which encompass all surface uses of the forest.

After these decisions are provided to the public, they will be sent to the BLM. The identified lands can then be offered for competitive leasing by the BLM.

When seeking an application for permit to drill, an operator must submit a surface-use plan of operations identifying how the company intends to handle surface-disturbing activities and reclamation. The plan would have to be approved by the Forest Service, after appropriate environmental analysis, before the operator operations could proceed.

These rules also provide for inspections and enforcement once operations begin.

Written comments on the proposed new rules should be sent to: F. Dale Robertson, Chief, Forest Service, USDA, P.O. Box 96090, Washington, D.C. 20090-6090. For more information, Stanley Kurcaba, Minerals and Geology Management Staff, may be contacted at 703-235-9715.

Jay Humphreys (202) 447-4211

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## **U.S. TOBACCO INDUSTRY TO BUY 427 MILLION POUNDS OF 1989 BURLEY TOBACCO**

WASHINGTON, Jan. 19—U.S. cigarette manufacturers plan to purchase 427.0 million pounds (farm sales weight) of 1989 crop burley tobacco, a U.S. Department of Agriculture official said today.

Milton Hertz, administrator of USDA's Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service, said provisions of the Agricultural Adjustment Act of 1938 require major domestic cigarette manufacturers to report annually to USDA their intended purchases of burley tobacco from U.S. auction markets and producers.

Data on intended purchases is used to determine, in part, USDA's annual burley tobacco marketing quota. The other two factors determining the quota are average annual burley exports for the preceding three years and the amount of tobacco needed to attain reserve stock levels. The 1989 quota will be announced by Feb. 1.

Hertz said annual burley exports for 1986, 1987 and 1988 averaged 160.6 million pounds.

In 1988, manufacturers' intended purchases totaled 364.5 million pounds.

Robert Feist (202) 447-6787

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## **USDA INSTALLS FEE FOR VOLUNTARY INSPECTION OF EXPORT TOBACCO**

**WASHINGTON**, Jan. 23—The U.S. Department of Agriculture will install a separate fee for voluntary, or industry-solicited, inspection of tobacco for export, effective Jan. 24.

J. Patrick Boyle, administrator of USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service, said the fee, \$.0025 per pound, will recover costs of salaries, travel, and administration incurred in inspecting and grading this tobacco. The fee does not affect charges for any inspection and grading services for tobacco destined for domestic uses, he said.

"Grading of export tobacco involves special costs," said Boyle. For example, he said, tobacco inspectors must be on call throughout the year, as ships load the product, while domestic grading and inspection is seasonal. Also, the expertise needed to grade export tobacco is greater than that required in the grading of domestic tobacco.

"Without the separate fee," the voluntary domestic tobacco grading and inspection programs would have to absorb some of these expenses. That would be neither fair nor practical," Boyle said. The public comments USDA received on the October proposal of a separate fee for exported tobacco favored it, he said.

Authority for USDA's assessing user fees for its tobacco grading and inspection programs is in the Tobacco Inspection Act of 1935.

Notice of the new fee will be published as a final rule in the Jan. 24 Federal Register. Copies may be obtained from AMS, USDA, Tobacco Division, P. Box 96456, Rm. 502 Annex, Washington, D.C. 20090-6456.

Clarence Steinberg (202) 447-6179

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## **USDA AMENDS BRUCELLOSIS REGULATIONS**

**WASHINGTON**, Jan. 24—The U.S. Department of Agriculture has amended brucellosis regulations to restrict the interstate movement of female cattle from areas with a high incidence of the disease to protect the areas where brucellosis has been eradicated.

Brucellosis, or "Bang's disease" causes reduced fertility and lower milk yields in cattle. Humans also can be infected if they drink

unpasteurized milk from infected animals or if they handle infected animals.

James W. Glosser, administrator of USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, said the regulations apply to states and areas designated as Class B or C under the brucellosis eradication program. States and areas are categorized as Class Free or Class A through C, with each lower class having more stringent restrictions on the interstate movement of cattle.

"Under the amended regulations, female cattle and test-eligible male cattle from Class C areas could no longer be shipped across state lines unless they were spayed or branded with an "S" and shipped directly to a slaughter establishment or a quarantined feedlot," said Glosser.

"These cattle must be spayed or branded unless moved directly from farm to slaughter. It's important that cattle are properly identified when they move through the marketplace in order to maintain their identity and contain the spread of brucellosis. These restrictions would not apply to shipments from certified brucellosis-free herds, which must be tested annually to make sure they are still free of infection," he said.

In Class B states, brucellosis-exposed female cattle would be allowed to move interstate to recognized slaughtering establishments and quarantined feedlots only. Heifers shipped from herds quarantined for brucellosis would be subject to the same spaying and S-branding restrictions as females and test-eligible males. Currently, heifers under 12 months of age that are vaccinated for brucellosis can be shipped from quarantined herds.

The regulations are part of a cooperative federal and state program to eradicate brucellosis and to protect states where eradication efforts have been successful.

This final rule is effective Feb. 17.

Marlene Stinson (301) 436-7255

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## **USDA ANNOUNCES PREVAILING WORLD MARKET RICE PRICES**

**WASHINGTON**, Jan. 24—Acting Under Secretary of Agriculture Richard W. Goldberg today announced the prevailing world market prices of milled rice, loan rate basis, as follows:

- long grain whole kernels, 9.79 cents per pound;
- medium grain whole kernels, 9.12 cents per pound;
- short grain whole kernels, 9.07 cents per pound;
- broken kernels, 4.89 cents per pound.

Minimum loan repayment rates for 1987 crop loans are the higher of the world price or 50 percent of the loan rate. For 1988 crop rice, the minimum repayment rates are the higher of the world price or 60 percent of the loan rate.

Based upon these prevailing world market prices for milled rice, rough rice world prices are estimated to be:

- long grain, \$6.05 per hundredweight;
- medium grain, \$5.71 per hundredweight;
- short grain, \$5.45 per hundredweight.

The prices announced are effective today at 3:00 P.M. EST. The next scheduled price announcement will be made Jan. 31 at 3:00 P.M. EST, although prices may be announced sooner if warranted.

Gene Rosera (202) 447-5954

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## **USDA RELEASES SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION PLAN FOR 1990's**

**WASHINGTON**, Jan. 26—The U.S. Department of Agriculture today released a ten-year update of the National Conservation Program, designed to guide USDA soil and water conservation activities through 1997.

Deputy Secretary of Agriculture Peter C. Myers said the program lays the groundwork for increased coordination among the eight USDA agencies involved with soil and water conservation activities and with the farm community.

"Top priorities will be reducing soil erosion, especially on highly erodible croplands, and protecting water quality and quantity," Myers said. "Setting national conservation priorities was a new idea when we adopted the first National Conservation Program in 1982, and it has made our programs much more effective."

Other major goals, said Myers, will be strengthening the conservation partnership with state and local agencies and other local groups, and increasing the consistency and cost-effectiveness of USDA programs.

George S. Dunlop, USDA assistant secretary for natural resources and environment, said the program was developed in response to the Soil and Water Resources Conservation Act of 1977 to guide USDA's soil and water conservation activities on non-federal land.

The program is updated periodically to assure that USDA's soil and water conservation programs are responsive to the nation's long-term needs.

Today's update, titled "A National Program for Soil and Water Conservation: the 1988-97 Update," is the first since 1982. It responds to the changing conditions in world demand and agricultural production, new technology and crop supplies, Dunlop said.

USDA agencies involved in conservation activities are the Agricultural Research Service, Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service, Cooperative State Research Service, Economic Research Service, Extension Service, Farmers Home Administration, Forest Service, and Soil Conservation Service.

Dunlop said that partnership is the key to the success of the new program. "USDA conservation programs are voluntary, within the context of the 1985 Food Security Act, which this program fully supports," he said. "Our role is to provide information and technical help to land-users as they exercise private property rights and meet stewardship responsibilities to conserve and protect soil and water resources."

Dunlop also said that the document reflects extensive comments and concerns expressed by the public, state agencies, conservation districts and groups who responded to the draft plan released last year. Respondents approved of establishing erosion reduction and water quality as USDA's top conservation priorities, he said.

Other topics most frequently referred to by respondents included USDA's plans for providing assistance for state and local priorities; linking USDA benefits to conservation goals; increasing research on low-input, sustainable farming methods; and developing practical conservation alternatives for small-scale, limited-resource and minority producers.

In establishing priorities, USDA also considered changes in resource conditions, the economy and national policies of Congress and the administration. The elevated priority of protecting the quantity and quality of surface and ground water will be addressed by USDA programs of research, education, and technical and financial assistance, said Dunlop.

Copies of the report are available from local USDA agency offices or by writing the Secretary of Agriculture, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D.C. 20250.

Leslie Wilder (202) 447-3608

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